



FRANCIS WILSON and DE WOLF HOPPER
in "ERMINIE" at the PARK THEATRE

BELASCO AND ART OF ACTING AS EXEMPLIFIED IN "DEBURAU"

By LAWRENCE REAMER.

DAVID BELASCO recognizes the necessity of increasing the number of stars in the theatre. He does not confine his efforts, moreover, to the youthful beauties enrolled under his banners. Arthur Hopkins is another manager who is seeking new players entitled to be among the elect of the theatre, and lifted Ben-Ami from the surroundings of an alien stage. Now Joseph Schildkraut, son of the more famous Rudolph of the same ilk, is to make his bow before the public. George M. Cohan sought the potential star from the French theatre in Georges Renavent. In London there is the same search just now for eminent strangers who may lengthen the list of famous players. The Yiddish theatre did not escape the vigilant eye of the entrepreneur over there any more than it did here. Maurice Moscovitch, who had served his artistic apprenticeship in our Ghetto and London's, was invited to play his best known roles in English. He has kept his place on the London stage.

This international need of actors to interest the public is the inevitable result of the expansion of theatrical interest. Probably all the actors required will be forthcoming. They usually have been in the past, with serious consequences chiefly to the managers, who may have to pay them a little more than they want to. But that is not serious in this golden age for the theatre. Our own stage is capable of supplying most of the needed players in its own ranks. The manager in entrusting to him the title role in Sacha-Guitry's play was fully justified. Mr. Atwill is graceful in movement, his face is rich and well trained and his facial expression while not especially graphic is plastic and capable of indicating a considerable gamut of emotion. He is best in moments of comparative repose. It was for that reason that he was chosen to play the title role in the little theatre production. It was in his acting of the later scenes with their deeper note of experience of life that Mr. Belasco's judgment concerning his new star was most completely justified.

Acclimated in Our Theatre.

Lionel A. Will was practically acclimated in our theatre, however, before Mr. Belasco decided that he should be a star in "Deburau." The wisdom of the manager in entrusting to him the title role in Sacha-Guitry's play was fully justified. Mr. Atwill is graceful in movement, his face is rich and well trained and his facial expression while not especially graphic is plastic and capable of indicating a considerable gamut of emotion. He is best in moments of comparative repose. It was for that reason that he was chosen to play the title role in the little theatre production. It was in his acting of the later scenes with their deeper note of experience of life that Mr. Belasco's judgment concerning his new star was most completely justified.

His Part in "The Lodger."

Yet there was nothing in Mr. Atwill's share of "The Lodger" to create the belief that within such a short time he would have reached such a high place in the American theatre. Nor was there any further suggestion of this rapid rise in "Other Men's Shoes." As the English statesman in "Tiger! Tiger!" Mr. Atwill's artistic stature had perceptibly grown. Under Mr. Belasco's direction he has been able to play Deburau in a way that puts him at once among the accepted stars of the day. So he need not quarrel with the fact that he has led him so swiftly to the hill to Parnassus. If David Belasco, however, had shown in the production of Sacha Guitry's play no more than the development of one player his task would have been most inadequately performed. He had an author to interpret, a period to recreate. How completely he has done this the audiences that crowd the Belasco Theatre every night eloquently testify. "All Paris" of the early nineteenth century flocks to the little theatre made famous by Deburau and his prophet Jules Janin. One hears these famous men—and one woman in George Sand—whisper and sigh and smile and frown in the dim lights of the auditorium and seem them depart rejoicing after the pantomime.

The Spirit of the Play.

Drably the scene is left to only the theatre people who talk of the business of the evening, the intemperance of this actor, the great drawing power of that one. Sacha Guitry builds on the circumstance of the theatre's life the highly colored and picturesque facade to his play which gradually narrows down to the inner and more concentrated emotions. The spirit of the day, however, is in the exquisite boudoir of Marie and in the hazy abode of the hero. Indeed, Mr. Belasco has with masterly skill created the very essence of a remote period and a remote spot. But he is an incurable romanticist. It is the dominating element in all his productions in which it can possibly find place. It must then be Mr. Belasco's romantic sense which has led him so unerringly along the right path in the new play from Paris. It is not a great nor an epoch



GRANT MITCHELL and MISS ANN ANDREWS
in "THE CHAMPION"
LONGACRE THEATRE



SENORA CARITOS
in "SPANISH LOVE"
MAXINE ELLIOTT'S
THEATRE



HELEN WARE
in "PAGANS"
PRINCESS THEATRE



MRS. COBURN
in "THE YELLOW JACKET"
MATINEES CORT THEATRE



MARY HAY and WALTER CATLETT
in "SALLY"
NEW AMSTERDAM THEATRE



MISS MARGARET LAWRENCE
in "TRANSPLANTING JEAN"
CORT THEATRE

Did You Hear?

About the Change of Flavor in a Play, the Little Importance of "Erminie" in London as Well as the Hard Facts About the Foreign Pictures?

THE curious experiences of the play called "Weibteufel" from its production at the Irving Place Theatre until its final emergence at the Playhouse as a full-fledged metropolitan success under the management of W. A. Brady make an interesting history of dramatic camouflage. The play by the Austrian dramatist, Karl Schönherr, had been a great success before Rudolf Christians brought it out at the Irving Place Theatre. It had an almost unprecedented number of performances there. Soon after its original production Andrews Dippel had seen its possibilities for the American stage and planned the manner of its production here.

He set out to engage George Arliss for the role of the ailing old husband, and Olga Petrova, who was then still contemplating a career on the dramatic stage, was to play the heroine. A popular actor was to be engaged for the role of the young soldier, George C. Tyler, manager of Mr. Arliss, was also interested in the scheme, which might have been an important incident in theatrical history had not the United States entered the world war then and made the execution of the plan impossible. From that time until Mr. Brady gave the play a tentative production out of town last spring it was not heard of. Indeed it was only by chance that the favor of Sacha-Guitry to Garle and placing the scene in the Pyrenees that the present production was considered possible.

How "Erminie" Happened. Rudolph Aronson before his death wrote his memoirs and there is some interesting information concerning "Erminie" in one chapter. "The date, May 10, 1886, will long be marked in the history of comic opera," he wrote, "because on that evening I began the presentation of 'Erminie,' the most successful operetta of modern times. This marvellous operetta was staged by Harry Paulsen, the author of the libretto, and it enjoyed 1,250 performances at the Casino alone, which is almost unprecedented. The first knowledge I had of 'Erminie' was in 1886, when Mr. Edward Carson called me from London, saying 'Can you procure for me 500 new operetta by Paulsen and Jakobowski entitled 'Erminie' and send it to me in New York?'"

May Yule, who has been living in the Northwest for the past ten years, will this week return to the city from San Francisco. She will be seen in "Marrying Mary," in which Marie C. Hill used to appear. Miss Yule has not been seen in the East for years. She purchased the American rights to the opera in conjunction with Willie Edouin and Miss Melotte and finally arranged with me for its production at the Casino. In the course of its phenomenal run they received \$120,000 in royalties on it. This is another forcible illustration that occasionally a fair success in Europe may make a great success in America."

News of Two Favorites. May Yule, who has been living in the Northwest for the past ten years, will this week return to the city from San Francisco. She will be seen in "Marrying Mary," in which Marie C. Hill used to appear. Miss Yule has not been seen in the East for years. She purchased the American rights to the opera in conjunction with Willie Edouin and Miss Melotte and finally arranged with me for its production at the Casino. In the course of its phenomenal run they received \$120,000 in royalties on it. This is another forcible illustration that occasionally a fair success in Europe may make a great success in America."

lowa even wanted to come to the Metropolitan Opera House for this amount during the twenty weeks of the season. But the irresistible Gail is there, so when the dancer's American contract was finally made it was for a tour of the country.

Amidst all the rumors of failures and premature endings of seasons, the success of Mme. Pavlova has continued without abatement. At the Manhattan Opera House the receipts were unprecedented. The same thing happened in Boston, and two performances in one day in Chicago drew about \$20,000. It seemed everywhere as if the country were waiting for the Russian prima donna, and nothing could keep the public out of the theatre when she arrived. So the lucky manager who brought her to this country will have no cause to complain of his luck, although the dancer does not share in these remarkable receipts. She receives only the stipulated sum.

A Picture From Abroad. The successful exploitation of a cinema from Europe at the Capitol, where it drew enormous audiences for two weeks, has opened the eyes of some of the managers of the picture palaces. "It did give them a shock," one of the picture men of importance said to the HERALD reporter, "to have a foreign picture make a success. And that one was a whole of a success. For years the picture men have been saying that foreign pictures were not liked here and wouldn't do. Of course, photography has not been up to the standard there since the war, nor has it been possible to recover yet. The only in Southern Italy have the foreign producers the same light to be found in California."

But they have some other things, which even the most indifferent spectators are certain to appreciate. The actors are absolutely unaware of the camera. They never look at it. Nobody would know it existed. The actors go about their work as if they were in a play. Remember how our own dear little cuties think always of the camera and show it so plainly in expression and gesture. Then there are no close-ups. In the picture there is a close-up of the heroine, looking east, north, south, up and down and sideways until the cows come home. Of course, they are a bore. There were none of them to speak of in the picture at the Capitol, which is going to make its impression on our audiences. If they know their business as well as they say they do, it will make an impression on the producers also."

Out of Town Does Not Count. The plays which have for months enjoyed such unusual popularity here, such as "Lightnin'," "Irene," "The Gold Diggers" and the rest of the great success, have already been put to a severe test of their local popularity and came through it so bravely as to show their powers of drawing the ruble to be genuine. The local run of the average New York success used to show at once the appearance of the second and third companies on the road. So soon as they were sent out to the other cities the business in New York was expected to suffer a drop at once. Of course there has been no second company sent out to act "The Gold Diggers." It is not a musical play and there is no danger that its success will be so hazy. Nobody will want to hear them by the time the piece starts on its travels. Mr. Belasco, following his usual plan, will wait until the New York popularity of "Lightnin'" has been exhausted. In spite of the great demand for "Lightnin'" outside the city John Golden has sent out but one company. So far its travels have had no effect on the business of the local company. At every matinee at the Globe Theatre last week as well as at every evening performance as a matter of course the house was entirely sold out. So there has been no decrease of patronage because there is a company carrying the play about to the other cities. The case of "Irene" is still more remarkable. Four companies are carrying "Irene" over the country. It has been sung in all the large cities. But the demand to hear it in New York continues as great as ever. Evidently the stranger in New York, even if he has seen "Irene" at home, hurries to inspect the Simon pure article, so soon as he gets to town.

Actor's Soul Once Was Above Pajamas

John Cumberland, Comedian,
Had Hopes of Becoming
Great Tragedian.

John Cumberland expects some day to get beyond the reach of the bedroom face—yet he wears the coat of an old suit of pajamas in his dressing room. Maybe it's from force of habit. More likely it's because producers seem intent on reducing the leading comedian of "Ladies' Night" to such a state of nature untrammelled that he'll have only his art to protect him, and anything would be welcome which would stave off the prospect while he's making up.

"When I first turned to revealing boudoir secrets like a beauty specialist," said the comedian the other day at the Eltinge Theatre, "I was attired just as though I never went near a bedroom, with only a dressing gown to blush for. In the next play I wore a pajama coat, but still had a pair of trousers for an alibi. But in this production I discarded my form in a full suit of pajamas. Then after that I appeared in my heavy winter ones. In this comedy I wear a Spanish costume that is very little Spanish and less costume, and in my next play—but I hope the worst doesn't happen. Perhaps by then I shall be emancipated and won't have to quake at the sight of a fourposter."

Beds Lose Their Fascination. "Beds, I must admit, have lost their fascination for me. Possibly it's because I've studied them too much at first hand. First, I was crowded around them, then I hid under them, eventually I climbed into them, and by that time it seemed to be considered I was ripe to graduate from bedroom to Turkish bathhouse. But for the first time a henpecked husband because no other play was available for him, the Shuberts saw me, and from then on I was fated to be henpecked from theatre to theatre."

Throws In a Pathetic Touch. "Such roles tend toward a stereotyped nature, unless one makes constant efforts to put a human face on the part. I didn't identify this present character he'd be the kind he shouldn't be allowed to live after the first five minutes of the show. You can't have people laughing at you too much—it must be with you. One way to do it was to throw in a rather pathetic touch, and I've engineered a serious moment for this part—put it in myself, at great expense. Though it's a rapid farce, the spectators stop suddenly at that quiet moment and look at the actor. He's a pretty good goat after all."

"Another way of humanizing the part is by natural speaking, and now I have just what I need. I seem to be just a little bit of a little bit of the audience. That's an asset in getting and keeping attention, for once theatregoers know you speak quietly, they'll take care to catch every word, and anything that is said in plain to the audience will seem more worth listening to. Another method of getting laughs—and keeping them—is not to speak too quickly after each line, but to wait until the audience has recovered from the first blow. Too many comedians lose out by spouting everything in a continuous stream as though they had to consider that their system before they caught a train."

"But naturalizing a character for the footlights has its advantages, because people, thinking they're paying me a compliment, say, 'You're just like your character off the stage.' And I resent that, because away from the theatre I'm rather aggressive."

"ERMINIE" COSTS \$12,500. The revival of "Erminie" at the Park Theatre to-morrow night makes interesting a comparison of the cost of the original production made in 1886 and the present one.

Willie Edouin and Frank Sanger purchased the American rights on speculation, and Rudolph Aronson, then manager of the New York Casino, ventured practically all he possessed to make it a success. The hit it made in history. Mr. Aronson proved that he had struck a veritable mine. The profits were counted by hundreds of thousands and the authors received nearly \$6,000 each for the first season. The figures given by A. H. Canby, in 1886 business manager of the Casino, make an interesting comparison with those of the present day. The running expenses of the original production at that time considered very heavy; and it was then considered that an attraction must play to \$4,000 in order to make ends meet. At least \$5,000 should be reached to show that they termed a substantial profit.

But to turn over the pages of time and examine the figures of to-day brings one of the most startling conclusions. The salary of George C. Tyler, associated with William Farnum, has received "Erminie," and the approximate figures represent an investment of \$80,000, as against a probable \$25,000 in 1886. The salary and expenses sheet of the present production, headed by Francis Wilson and De Wolf Hopper, totals a trifling over \$12,500 weekly. Therefore, taking all the figures into account, it is a saving of \$67,500. A pair of silver curtains which reflect every change of light is one of the chief joys of the "Greenwich Village Follies, 1920," while a Valentine episode in delicate pastel colors is effective.

The samovar number, which is full of color and life as one of the diversities of the Russian ballet, is a particular happy feature. Against the background of quiet colors a procession of Russians enter, several bearing lighted candlesticks and all arrayed in pictorial costumes. After the "Song of the Samovar," Mr. Howard Marsh, Ivan Harhoff and Miss Phoebe present a Russian dance.

Comedians Have to Be Vocal Riots

The Howard Brothers (Willie and Eugene) joined the Winter Garden almost at its inception, so few members of that big organization are better qualified to discourse on the unusual type of audience found there, since they virtually grew up with the place. They were invited to talk for publication on this subject the other night while they were crawling into their socks and greasing their hair in the dressing room for "The Passing Show of 1921," the new production in which these comedians now are being starred—which means more scrambling quick changes than ever.

"Irene" 60 WEEKS OLD. Beginning its sixtieth week at the Vanderbilt Theatre, "Irene" now has surpassed the record of forty-eight weeks at the Casino credited to "Florodora," the first two weeks of the "Merry Widow" at the New Amsterdam, the forty-seven weeks of "A Chinese Honeymoon" at the Casino and the thirty-nine weeks of "Oh Boy" at the Princess.

IN BROOKLYN THEATRES. David Belasco's production of John Archibald's comedy, "Call the Doctor," will be at the Montauk Theatre this week, after a successful engagement at the Empire. The original cast, including Philip Merivale, Misses Janet Beecher and Charlotte Walker, William Morris, Miss Thelma Marshall and Thomas Wise, will appear. "The Man Who Came Back," the Jules Eckert Goodman melodrama which had a long run at the Playhouse, will be at the Majestic at a week, with Paul Gordon and Miss Ada Gleason. Misses Trilzie Frazzetta and Marie Nordstrom, Wilbur Mack and comedienne De Haven and Nice will be the principal performers at the Orpheum. Clark and Bergman will head the bill at the Bushwick. "Naughty, Naughty" will be the burlesque offering at the Star.

AT UPTOWN THEATRES. The production by William Harris, Jr., of "East Is West," the comedy by John R. Hyman and Samuel Shimeles, which had a long run at the Astor Theatre with Miss Fay Bainter in the chief roles, comes to the Shubert Rivera this week. "The Storm," the thrilling forest fire play, will return to the Bronx Opera House for one week. George Broadhurst's production of the melodrama by Langdon McCormick was one of the successes of last season, and has in its cast Miss Katharine Hayden, Ben Taggart, Eric Maxon, Charles Henderson and Joseph Driscoll.

BURLESQUE AT COLUMBIA. Joe Hurtig will bring his Bowersy Burlesques to the Columbia Theatre this week and present a two act travesty called "Going Up and Coming Down."

It was written by Loney Haskell, with music by Hugh W. Schubert, and is a series of incidents based upon the experiences of two inexperienced aviators, Frank Harcourt and Billy Foster, comedians, head the cast, and will have the assistance of Louise Barlow, Libby Hart and Kitty Glasco.

STARS TO AID ACTORS' FUND. Daniel Frohman has already arranged an imposing array of names for the annual benefit for the Actors' Fund of America, which will take place at the Century Theatre on Friday afternoon, Jan. 21. There are to be seven especially arranged sketches and acts, including one by James Forbes, author of "The Famous Mrs. Falc." Among those assisting at their presentation, according to an announcement yesterday, will be Misses Margaret Anglin, Nora Bayes, Florence Reed, May Irwin, Marilyn Miller, Patricia Collinge, Frances White, Julia Arthur and Ada Mae Weiss, Holbrook Blinn, Frank Bacon, Leon Errol, Edmond Breese, Frank Traven, Edgar Selwyn, Fred Truesdel, William Faversham, H. C. Browne and Alphonse Ethier, in addition to thirty girls of society supported by one hundred sailors from the Navy Yard in a special pleasant feature, arranged by Alexander Leftwich.

The first gallery seat has been purchased by Mrs. Falc, at \$50. Two orchestra seats, at \$250, have been purchased by Frank Z. Storrs, publisher of the theatre programme.

to a smaller theatre in another city everybody says. "Phew, the Howards are certainly loud," for we've grown accustomed to conversational war whoops. Our tones drop as we go further away from New York, so that by the time we have reached the asthma belt out in Bismarck, N. D., we've shrunk to a whisper."

"The shape and size of the house make the work difficult," went on Willie, while Eugene caught his breath after this burst of oratory. "It's so wide that it's hard to establish an intimate contact with every one in your audience and you can't turn your face sideways to the audience and say 'What time is it?' to another actor unless you own a good roar. You have to keep your face in circular motion from one side of the auditorium to the other. It makes you feel like a concert singer. You've got to step down to the footlights and let yourself go—then those in back think you're just talking to them as man to man. Lines must be more obvious than in smaller houses and they must be made clear with a lot of business—and even then those out front sometimes refuse to laugh."

"They're a cosmopolitan lot," said Eugene, "and in the early days this was especially so when they had Miss Gaby Deslys, and the place used to be so filled with Frenchmen you wondered where they grew so many. After the first few weeks, when the real New Yorkers have all come, the audiences are mainly composed of what they want to see in the comedy—what they want to see in the comedy—what they want to see in the comedy."

"But when we go on the road," said Willie with mischievous relish, "that's when we have our innings."

Three New Plays and Two Revivals to Be Offered at Theatres This Week

MONDAY.

PARK THEATRE—"Erminie," famous comic opera, will be revived by George C. Tyler, in association with William Farnum, with Francis Wilson and De Wolf Hopper as the stars. Mr. Wilson will play Cadeaux, a part he created when "Erminie" was first produced in 1886 at the Casino. Mr. Hopper will be Ravannes. The title role will be sung by Irene Williams. Madge Lessing will play Captain Delaney, Rosamond Whiteside will be Javotte, Jennie Weathersby of the original company will be seen again and Warren Proctor will have the tenor role.

LONGACRE THEATRE—Sam H. Harris will present Grant Mitchell in "The Champion," a farcical comedy by Thomas London and A. E. Thomas. The story revolves around the reception to William Burroughs, who has returned to his ancestral English home after fifteen years in the United States. For the supporting cast Mr. Harris has chosen Ann Andrews, Arthur Elliott, Frank Westerton and Gerald Hamer.

CORT THEATRE—Margaret Lawrence and Arthur Byron will appear as co-stars in "Transplanting Jean," a comedy from the French of Robert de Fiers and Gaston Arman de Caillaret. The play, which is a tribute to those in the prime of life, is being presented by Byron and Marshall.

MANHATTAN OPERA HOUSE—Mr. Oscar Hammerstein's repertoire for the coming week will include Lecocq's operetta, "Cochin-Giroda," presented on Monday evening, with Wednesday matinee, and beginning Tuesday and every following evening, with Saturday matinee, Lehar's operetta, "Wo die Lieder Sings (Where the Lark Sings)."

LEXINGTON THEATRE—Fritz Leiber will continue in Shakespearean repertoire.

TUESDAY.

PRINCESS THEATRE—Max R. Wilner and Sigmund Romberg will offer "Pagans," a modern play by Charles Anthony. The central figure, a young artist incapacitated as a result of the war, is portrayed by Joseph Schildkraut, a young American actor who has spent much time in Germany. The author of the play is a son of Gardner C. Anthony, dean of the Engineering School of Tufts College. The cast contains Helen Ware, Regine Wallace, Alice Plisher and Harold Vermilye.

CORT THEATRE (Matinee)—"The Yellow Jacket," by George C. Hazelton and Bonrimo, will be presented by Mr. and Mrs. Charles Coburn, in association with Marc Klaw, Inc., as the first of a series of eight matinees on Tuesdays and Fridays in January. The costumes, the scenery and the general presentation will be reproduced again as in the first production in 1916. Many of the actors who appeared then will play their original roles. The cast includes Arthur Shaw, Schuyler Ladd, Howard Kyle, Donald Gallagher, Walter F. Scott, Lark Taylor, Juliette Day, Antoinette Walker, Lillian Spencer, Helen Tilden and Mr. and Mrs. Coburn.

TIMES SQUARE THEATRE (Matinee)—"Mixed Marriage," by St. John Ervine, will move from the Brimhall Playhouse to the Times Square Theatre for a series of matinees on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays. New scenery has been built for the larger stage. Evening performances and Thursday and Saturday matinees will be given at the Brimhall during the week.

MR. COBURN IS THE CHORUS.

Charles Coburn, in the presentation of "The Yellow Jacket," which he and Mrs. Coburn will present at the Cort Theatre in association with the Klawns, lifts the chorus to a position of supreme importance. The chorus is the central character of the play.

"I am the author, the producer, the manager and the director of this play," Mr. Coburn informs the audience with celestial assurance. "The actors may seem good, but I trained them. There-